

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ALGIER 00307 031218Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07
NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 /037 W
-----031254Z 037701 /53
R 031140Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5858
INFO AMEMBASSY RABAT

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT AG
SUBJECT: ALGERIAN ELECTION ATMOSPHERICS

1. WELL CONNECTED WESTERN RESIDENT OF ALGIERS CONFIRMS
OUR IMPRESSION THAT GOA HAS COME TO VIR-
TUAL STANDSTILL BECAUSE OF ELECTION PREPARATIONS. SOURCE, WHO
HAS EXTENSIVE DEALINGS WITH GOVERNMENT, SAYS THAT EVEN SIMPLEST
BUSINESS IS NOT BEING TRANSACTED AND THAT HIGH LEVEL OFFICIALS
TOO PREOCCUPIED WITH PREPARATIONS FOR VOTING EVEN TO RECEIVE
VISITORS.

2. SOURCE ADDS THAT AGRICULTURE MINISTER AND COUN-
CIL OF THE REVOLUTION MEMBER TAYEBI LARBI WILL SEEK
ELECTION AS WILL AGRICULTURE MINISTRY SECY GEN BOUKLI.
OTHER SENIOR OFFICIALS, NOTABLY INFORMATION MINISTER
TALEB IBRAHIMI, ALSO RUMORED TO BE CANDIDATES,
BUT THIS INFORMATION LESS CERTAIN.

3. SOURCE NOTES THAT ELECTION PROCEEDINGS MAY WELL BE MORE
LIVELY THAN HAD ORIGINALLY BEEN SUPPOSED. POSTPONEMENT OF
ELECTION DATE AND INCREASE IN NUMBER OF CANDIDATES PER SEAT
WAS DEEMED NECESSARY BECAUSE SOME UNDESIRABLE TYPES
HAD FOUND THEIR WAY ONTO PRELIMINARY LISTS OF CANDIDATES WHILE
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OTHER MEN, WHOSE CAUSE REGIME HAD ESPOUSED,
WERE NOT SELECTED. BOUKLI, FOR EXAMPLE, IS SAID NOT TO HAVE
SUCCEEDED IN SECURING NOMINATION BY FLN
CADRES IN TLEMCEN, CITY FROM WHICH HE PLANS TO RUN. SOURCE
POINTS OUT THAT, WITH EACH CANDIDATE HAVING REPRESENTATIVE
AT POLLS, TASK OF ASSURING THAT RIGHT MEN ELECTED
COULD PROVE DIFFICULT FOR REGIME. THIS POINT HAS NOT ESCAPED

POLITICALLY AWARE ALGERIANS, SOURCE SAYS.

4. COMMENT: FOREGOING ILLUSTRATES THAT THERE ARE POLITICAL PITFALLS EVEN IN ONE PARTY ELECTION. REGIME, ALREADY EMBARRASSED BY POSTPONEMENT, MAY HAVE FURTHER PROBLEMS AHEAD, AND MIGHT EVEN CONCEIVABLY FIND ITSELF SADDLED WITH AND ASSEMBLY RELUCTANT TO PLAY PASSIVE ROLE ASSIGNED IT BY CONSTITUTION.

5. INFORMATION ON TAYEBI LARBI'S CANDIDATURE SEEMS PLAUSIBLE. HE IS GENERALLY THOUGHT TO HAVE FAILED AS MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, AND REGIME MAY BE SEEKING TO HAVE HIM ELECTED PRESIDENT OF ASSEMBLY, THEREBY GIVING HIM RELATIVELY PRESTIGIOUS SINECURE.

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